



# County of Ottawa

## *Press Release*



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For Immediate Release

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### Weekly Events to Celebrate Law Day

Ottawa County, MI – This Law Day, May 1, coincides with the 800th anniversary of the issuance of the Magna Carta. Law Day celebrates the contributions of this great charter of liberty issued at Runnymede, England in 1215. The Magna Carta's most cited provision declares "No free man shall be seized or imprisoned or stripped of his rights or possessions...except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land." Inspired by this provision, Americans have come to associate the early roots of our cherished due process rights with Magna Carta. Over the centuries, Magna Carta has become the embodiment of the principle that *no person, no matter how powerful, is above the law*. Magna Carta's importance is the equivalent of what Lexington and Concord were for the American Revolution and what Selma was for the American Civil Rights Movement : a symbol for freedom and human rights.

Ottawa County is holding a series of events to celebrate Law Day, beginning with a community run and highlighted by the dedication of a mural created by local youth which will hang permanently in the Holland 58<sup>th</sup> District Courthouse.

To kick-off the events, Ottawa County is partnering with The Katty Shack 5K, which will be held on Saturday, April 25 at 9AM in Grand Haven. The Sixth Annual Katty Shack Race is in memory of Katherine Brown and Sharmaine, Jeremy and Tyler Zimmer. All four of these individuals were brutally murdered in Wright Township in 2008. Funds raised by the 5K race benefit The Crime Victim Foundation. The Crime Victim Foundation provides mini-grants to victims of crime where restitution cannot otherwise be made. To date, Katty Shack has raised more than \$50,000 for crime victims. This year's race supporters are the Center for Women in Transition in Holland and the YWCA in Grand Rapids, two agencies who assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Runners and walkers can still register for the Katty Shack. There are finish line prizes and opportunities to win raffle prizes for all participants. Pre-race events include a Spaghetti Dinner at St. Patrick's church. Post-race events include a free Pancake Breakfast at St. John's church. Register and learn how you can donate to the foundation at [kattysackrace.com](http://kattysackrace.com).

Then, on May 1, students from Corpus Christie Middle School in Holland will take part in a mock trial in the Grand Haven Courthouse from 10AM until noon. Students will serve as prosecutors, defense attorneys and witnesses in a fictionalized case involving due process rights. Students from Baldwin Middle School in Hudsonville will serve as the jury. The students were given a case scenario to review and study in preparation. The trial is held in a real courtroom and presided over by Judge Hulsing, currently assigned to the criminal division of the 20th Circuit Court. Public is welcome, although seating is limited.

Also on May 1, Michigan State University Law Clinic representatives will be at the Grand Haven Courthouse from 8:30AM to noon offering free legal services to the public. Advice is available for many legal areas including civil rights, criminal law, housing law, family law, tax law, immigration law, intellectual property law and securities law. MSU law students operate these legal clinics under the supervision of attorneys and law professors. Similarly, Ottawa County operates a Legal Self Help Center throughout the year providing information about court processes, forms and practices. The help center has three locations in Ottawa County: the Grand Haven Courthouse, the Probate Court in West Olive and the District Court in Holland. Legal Self Help Center hours vary and are listed at [miottawa.org](http://miottawa.org).

Finally, on May 4, at 4:30PM, a dedication ceremony will be held in the Holland District Court to recognize artwork created by youth in Ottawa County's juvenile justice system. Over 100 youth from Ottawa County Juvenile Detention Center worked with Ottawa Area Intermediate School District art teacher, Angie Briggs-Johnson, to create three murals depicting parts of the Holland community which are meaningful to them. The murals powerfully capture the youths' view of their community and their place in it. The murals also embrace societal ideals including the need for diversity, tolerance and a sense of belonging. Public welcome.

Access county services and learn more at [miOttawa.org](http://miOttawa.org), [facebook.com/miottawa](https://facebook.com/miottawa) or [@miOttawa](https://twitter.com/miOttawa) on twitter.

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